

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO

MINNIE TAYLOR, Individually and
as Personal Representative of
the ESTATE OF LOUIE TAYLOR,
and HAROLD CUTHAIR,

Plaintiffs,

vs.

Case No.

21-cv-00613-GJF-JFR

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Defendant.

DEPOSITION OF MINNIE TAYLOR

April 5, 2022

8:30 a.m.

via videoteleconference

PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL RULES OF CIVIL
PROCEDURE, this deposition was:

TAKEN BY: MS. CHRISTINE H. LYMAN

Attorney for the Defendant

REPORTED BY: MABEL JIN CHIN, NM CCR #81

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1 before that he was doing better, but he wasn't really
2 eating that I know of. And that was -- that was my
3 concern, and -- and -- and I tried to talk to him, if
4 there is anything wrong, or if it's -- like I said, I
5 wasn't aware of these drugs.

6 Q. How did you notice that he wasn't eating?

7 A. I just -- I just tell him that, you know, I
8 cooked for him, he needs to eat, but -- but he would
9 say, I'm not hungry.

10 Q. Did he say that he was on any kind of diet
11 or was trying to eat less?

12 A. No. No. He didn't say anything. He will
13 just say that, I'm not hungry. I'm okay.

14 What totally upsets me, I know, I know
15 somebody brought all these things to him, because I --
16 he wasn't -- he wasn't like that. He was always happy
17 and -- and I know. Where will he get it? And those
18 pills, never, never saw them before.

19 What I found, I don't know what happened to
20 all those. I gave it to the officers when they -- I
21 don't know what they did with it, but I begged for
22 them, this is -- they didn't -- they didn't help him.

23 Q. The week before his death did Louie go
24 anywhere? Did he leave the house?

25 A. No, he was -- he just had been going to the

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1 casino here, here in Shiprock that's close by. That's
2 -- that's not that far. And he will go there and
3 pretty much -- but he didn't really go out to, like,
4 Towaoc or those places. I remember that he went to
5 just this one close by.

6 Q. So you said that he was normally happy. Did
7 he change in his personality that week?

8 A. Yes. Yes. It was right before -- before
9 his death. Yes.

10 Q. Tell me what he acted like.

11 A. He was just quiet. Quiet, and he just
12 didn't really -- I said he didn't really -- he -- he
13 usually does -- he is always -- he would eat a lot,
14 and -- and I just -- that suddenly changed. Change I
15 noticed about him before -- before his death.

16 Q. In that week do you remember if he continued
17 to exercise in the way he used to?

18 A. Um -- yeah, he -- the last time where he
19 went -- was in the same time was that before, a week
20 before his death. He went -- he went down to the old
21 high school -- um -- field. That's where he -- he
22 went running, which is just a little ways also. And,
23 yeah, he was still -- he was still up to his exercise.
24 That's the last time I remember that he went there.

25 Q. During this time was your other son living

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1 at home or was he at school?

2 A. He was at school.

3 Q. Did anybody else notice any changes in
4 Louie, that you talked to?

5 A. No. It was just myself. It was just me.

6 Q. Did he visit his father during this time
7 period?

8 A. I think it's, like, maybe from there maybe
9 he was, like, two weeks, two weeks before his death, I
10 think, talked to his dad.

11 Q. Do you recall whether his dad noticed
12 anything different and asked you about it?

13 A. No, I don't think so. I don't think he was
14 aware of it.

15 Q. And do you know whether Louie was talking to
16 his brother on the phone, or anything like that,
17 during this time?

18 A. Um -- I think he -- he did, but he wasn't --
19 but he said that he was -- he was normal. It was --
20 he was just his regular -- his regular calls, talk,
21 and he didn't -- he didn't notice anything because he
22 was away.

23 Q. And at this time Louie was still seeing
24 Bioncha; is that right?

25 A. I couldn't hear it.

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1 MR. BUFFINGTON: We couldn't hear that last.

2 Q. During this time was Louie still seeing
3 Bioncha?

4 A. No. No.

5 Q. So I'm going to open a new exhibit. This is
6 a typewritten summary of Mr. Charlie's interview with
7 you on March 2nd, 2020. I would like to mark this as
8 Exhibit 6.

9 (Exhibit 6 marked.)

10 Q. So, I believe that on Friday, February 28th,
11 you and Louie went to visit Karsten; is that right?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. So was that to check out UNM?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. So can you tell me what you remember about
16 this trip? Do you remember what time you left
17 Shiprock?

18 A. It was -- it was February 28th, before his
19 death. We left -- we left around in the morning. So
20 it was just him and I.

21 Q. Did you drive?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Now according to these notes, it says "Louie
24 had been quiet most of the trip and kept to himself.
25 Louie wasn't eating and had distanced himself from

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1 family." Do you recall Louie being quiet on the ride
2 to Albuquerque?

3 A. Um -- pretty much, you know. He will say --
4 he will say -- he will talk. I -- you know -- yeah,
5 he was talking. He was talking things. He was just
6 looking forward to seeing his brother, going to
7 Albuquerque to visit him, and check out the campus and
8 all of that. He was happy going there to do all that.

9 Q. I'm just wondering why these notes say that
10 he had been quiet most of the trip. Do you remember
11 him being quiet, or do you remember him talking a lot?

12 A. He was talking about half and half, talking
13 and quiet at the same time.

14 Q. Now, it said Louie wasn't eating and had
15 distanced himself from family. I know you said that
16 he was quiet, but did he do other things to distance
17 himself from you at that time?

18 A. No, not that I -- not that I noticed. It
19 was just, like -- some days even, you know, some days
20 he will -- you know, everybody has their days
21 sometimes. You know, they are quiet and not really
22 talking. So, I just pretty much -- pretty much
23 know -- know how he is.

24 Q. Did you think, as you were driving Louie to
25 Albuquerque, that something might have been wrong?

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1 A. Um -- yeah, I -- I just kind of asked him,
2 are you okay and -- but never -- never, ever crossed
3 -- never, ever crossed my mind that -- those drugs
4 never, ever crossed my mind. I never -- never, ever
5 think -- think that he would -- that he would get into
6 this. I should hear about it, and I just, like --
7 just -- at the end that's what I thought, oh my gosh,
8 what -- I never thought, you know, this would happen.
9 But if I had known, you know, that would happen, I
10 would have -- but it never crossed my mind that it had
11 something to do with that.

12 Q. Well, according to these notes it says that
13 "His brother asked him repeatedly if he was using
14 drugs." Did Karsten talk to you about any concerns
15 about Louie being on drugs?

16 A. Yes. Yes, he did. His brother was
17 concerned.

18 Q. So what about Louie made Karsten concerned?
19 Do you know?

20 A. He did. Yeah, he did ask -- he did ask him.
21 He -- he told him, you better not be on anything --
22 any type of drugs or anything, because mother is
23 really against it. And I never thought they would get
24 into anything like that. And he did question him and
25 he told him no. No, I'm not on anything.

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1 Q. Is there something in particular that
2 Karsten may have said to you? I think of Louie is on
3 drugs because of this way that he is acting, or
4 something he had seen?

5 A. Well, he was -- he was just like me. He
6 just -- he didn't want to think that he had got on
7 that. He just -- he just was really concerned. He
8 did ask him, but he denied it. He said, no, I'm not
9 on anything.

10 Q. So Louie -- so it says here that he denied
11 using drugs, but his behavior was odd to family. What
12 was he doing that was odd? Do you remember?

13 A. Nothing. He was just -- he was just --
14 mostly was quiet. He was just quiet and -- and -- and
15 he -- that's about it. He was just, like, oh, he is
16 just pretty much quiet and he didn't want to -- again,
17 you know, he didn't want to eat. He didn't want to
18 eat or do anything. And -- and he didn't -- he was
19 really -- he was really concerned about his brother
20 the whole time.

21 Q. So you think Karsten was concerned about
22 Louie the whole time?

23 A. Yes, he was. And -- and he told him that he
24 wanted -- his brother told him to stay with him. And
25 his brother really loved to call him a brother, a lot.

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1 He always calls him -- he had so much love for his
2 brother, so he was concerned, and he told him that he
3 could stay with him.

4 Q. So --

5 A. And that was at his dorm, showed him around
6 and to be with him. So he did. He did.

7 Q. So it does say here, at some point during
8 their visit Louie spoke of aliens. Do you remember
9 him speaking about aliens in Albuquerque?

10 A. That -- that's what his brother said.
11 That's what his brother said, but he just -- he was
12 just quiet. You know, what -- and he just didn't
13 understand that. And -- but -- so, he stayed with him
14 at his room --

15 Q. Did -- I'm sorry.

16 A. -- and I stayed by myself at a motel and he
17 stayed with his brother.

18 Q. Did you -- sorry.

19 A. And he said that he -- he was -- he was
20 okay. He slept good and he stayed with him. But his
21 room, the whole time, he told him to get rested and
22 take a shower and all that. So he was fine. He said
23 he didn't -- he didn't have any problem with him.

24 Q. Did you hear Louie talk about aliens during
25 this trip?

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1 A. No, not with me, but just with him.

2 Q. Were you always planning to have Louie stay
3 with his brother and for you to stay separately? Or
4 what was your original plan for how you would sleep in
5 Albuquerque?

6 A. Well, because, you know, they are boys and,
7 you know, if they want to stay together that's fine.
8 So I stayed by myself and I told them, you know, go
9 ahead. There's -- there's not enough room, anyway.
10 So I said, I'll stay -- I'll stay by myself. So he
11 did stay with his brother.

12 Q. How long were you planning this trip to
13 last?

14 A. Well, when we got there -- when we got
15 there, my son said -- we went there -- we got there
16 kind of, like, at the wrong time because he said he
17 has a lot of homework and he has a lot of studying to
18 do, and that he pretty much was pretty busy. So we
19 just -- we just kind of, like, spent time together,
20 and we just had -- we headed back the next day. This
21 was on a Saturday.

22 Q. So, I'm looking at this next paragraph. It
23 says "On Saturday, February 29th, 2020, the trip was
24 cut short and Minnie drove Louie back to Shiprock, New
25 Mexico."

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. So, are you saying, then, that the trip was
3 cut short because Karsten had to study?

4 A. Yes. He told me, I'm really busy. I have
5 got to get some homework done and I got a lot of
6 studying to do. And so it was okay -- it was okay
7 with me. And it was -- it was just, you know, a good
8 visit out there. So we -- we just made it cut short
9 and we came -- we headed back on Saturday.

10 Q. When you guys left was Karsten still worried
11 about Louie? Do you remember if he said anything like
12 that?

13 A. Yeah, he was -- he was. He was concerned
14 and -- he was concerned and he just kind of, like,
15 talked to me, he just was really concerned, and he
16 kept asking me, are you sure he's okay? What's wrong?
17 What's wrong with my brother? He never even seen him
18 like that. And I said, I don't know, because I didn't
19 know. And he was, he was really concerned. And he
20 said, I wish -- I wish you guys could stay longer, but
21 it's just that I am busy and -- take care -- take care
22 of my brother. Make sure he is okay. I do ask him --

23 I do ask him, man, what's wrong? Do you
24 want to talk about it? But he said, no, I'm okay.
25 I'm okay. There's nothing wrong. That's what he told

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1 his brother. And he did talk to me when we left. He
2 just told him, he said -- he loved his brother, and he
3 said, I'm really worried. Are you sure you're okay
4 again. I heard him before we left. And he said, I'm
5 fine. I'll be okay. Called each other brother.

6 And then said -- they said -- and he said
7 goodbye, that they love each other. And he just told
8 me, take care of my brother. Make sure he's okay.
9 And -- and then for him -- talk to me. Did anybody
10 and his friends come around or what? Are you sure
11 that's -- yeah, there's some people, not all the time,
12 but they got (unintelligible) with them, and he was
13 upset about that and --

14 Q. Do you mean Karsten was upset?

15 A. Yeah, because when I told him that, he said
16 maybe -- maybe somebody gave him something, because my
17 brother, I never saw him -- never saw him different.
18 But -- but he -- he was talking normal, so -- but it
19 was good. He wasn't like the same as what his brother
20 said about his brother, that he was a friend and what
21 happened. And he said -- he told me, any of his
22 friends come around and I think they are providing
23 something, but tell them to leave. I don't want them
24 coming to the house anymore. Okay? And I told him
25 yeah, I will. And I think they are giving him

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1 something.

2 Q. So when you were still in Albuquerque
3 Karsten told you that he thought people might have
4 been giving Louie drugs; is that right?

5 A. That's what he suspect, that, and that's
6 when he asked me is there anybody coming around? And
7 I said, not all the time, but there's some -- there
8 are times there's some people, they drive up, yes, and
9 that's when he was upset about that. And you don't
10 even know, mom, he said, you don't even know what they
11 are providing these days. I think they are giving him
12 something. And (unintelligible) mom, I don't even
13 know. I don't know what all these young people do and
14 what it does to you.

15 And that's when he told me when I left
16 there, I don't want anybody coming to see him anymore.
17 And just be aware of that. Tell them to leave,
18 because, it's --

19 (Brief loss of Witness' video connection.)

20 MR. BUFFINGTON: Okay. Shall we take about
21 a five-minute break, get composed a bit?

22 MS. LYMAN: I think that's a good idea.

23 Thanks, Forrest. Can we come back at about 2:02?

24 MR. BUFFINGTON: Precisely 2:02, yes.

25 (A recess was taken from 1:57 p.m.)

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1 through 2:02 p.m.)
 2 Q. (By Ms. Lyman) So before we broke we talked
 3 about your son, Karsten, having concerns that Louie
 4 may be taking any drugs. Did he suspect -- did he
 5 tell you that he suspected any particular drugs that
 6 Louie may be taking?

7 A. No, he didn't.

8 Q. Did you think about taking Louie to see a
 9 doctor at some point?

10 A. We did while we were there in Albuquerque.
 11 We did. And his brother -- I said, he is really
 12 concerned, and he told him that he can go -- we can
 13 take you and help you and take you to the hospital.
 14 But he refused. He said, I'm okay. There's nothing
 15 wrong with me. His brother did ask him. That's what
 16 his answer was. There's nothing wrong with me. I'm
 17 okay.

18 Q. So Louie was given the opportunity to go
 19 seek medical help in Albuquerque but he refused?

20 A. Yeah, because he just said, I'm okay. I'm
 21 okay. And that was it. He didn't ask him again.

22 Q. Um -- I'm going to go back to sharing my
 23 screen.

24 So this talks about -- and this is the
 25 interview with Mr. Charlie, and this is Exhibit 6. It

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1 states that "Minnie drove Louie home to Shiprock, New
 2 Mexico. Louie slept most of the drive home." Was
 3 that unusual for him, to sleep in the car?

4 A. No, not -- not all the way home, you know,
 5 part of it he slept and he was up the whole time until
 6 we got back to Shiprock.

7 Q. So did you notice anything strange about his
 8 behavior on the drive back?

9 A. No. No, he was -- he was fine. I didn't
 10 think anything. So he was fine.

11 Q. And then it says "They arrived home around
 12 6:00 p.m. Louie took a shower around 7:45 p.m.
 13 Minnie indicated it was odd for him to take a shower
 14 at that time of day." So when would Louie normally
 15 shower?

16 A. Um -- it depends. It depends whenever --
 17 depends whenever he will take a shower.

18 Q. And then it says "Shortly thereafter, Louie
 19 came running out and stated they need to leave because
 20 the aliens are coming to get them." So tell me what
 21 Louie was doing exactly when he said this?

22 A. Well, he just came -- he just came out of
 23 his room. He just came out of his room, like before
 24 when we came home, like I just said, he was okay. He
 25 was normal until we got home, and that's when -- he

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1 was in his room, and next thing I knew, he just came
 2 running out saying there are aliens -- aliens around.
 3 They're coming to get us. And he's just running back
 4 and forth to his room and into the living room, but --
 5 and I just said, there's no aliens. And that's
 6 when -- that's when I just couldn't figure him out
 7 what happened now. What happened to him now.

8 And that's when next thing I knew, he was
 9 just running around and -- and he ran out the back
 10 door and -- and I got up and went looking around for
 11 him, around the house and I couldn't find him.

12 That's when I got worried and that's why I
 13 went looking for him. I couldn't find him.

14 Q. So, when Louie ran -- before he ran out of
 15 the house, did he do anything other than talk about
 16 aliens?

17 A. No. Nothing.

18 Q. Did he throw anything?

19 A. No. No.

20 Q. Did he create any kind of disturbance in
 21 your house?

22 A. No. No. All he kept saying, the aliens are
 23 here. We have got to get out of here. They are
 24 around here. That's all he was saying. But other
 25 than that, he didn't -- he didn't do anything like

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1 damages or anything or -- nothing like that.

2 Q. So there's a reference here, it says "Louie
 3 ran outside into the neighbor's house." Do you know
 4 whose house he ran to?

5 A. Um -- it's -- a little ways from -- a little
 6 ways from -- I think that's where he went, next door
 7 neighbor, just a little ways.

8 Q. Do you know what he was doing at the
 9 neighbor's house?

10 A. No. I think -- I think -- um -- from what
 11 -- from hearing from my neighbor, that lady just said
 12 that he just went to her door and said there was
 13 aliens, just like he was doing at our house, and he
 14 left. That was it. That's all he told them.

15 Q. Okay. So after he started running outside,
 16 then it says you got scared and called for police.
 17 Tell me what -- what you said to the police when you
 18 called them.

19 A. When I called them I told them I needed
 20 help. I needed help. I don't know what's going on
 21 and I don't know what's wrong with my son, and I need
 22 help. I need help to get him to the hospital, he is
 23 not -- he is not drunk or anything like that, but
 24 something -- something is wrong. Something happened,
 25 and -- and -- and I said as a mother, and not knowing